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ity. These quotations, however, are so conflicting that it is impossible to decide from them whether the tax demanded was a tenth part of the estimated value of property, or a tenth part of the estimated income from property, or both (as Professor Mitchell implies). The confusion could easily be removed by reference to the papal letters on the subject, where it is called "*decimam omnium reddituum et proventuum*" (*The Register of S. Osmund*, edited by Jones, Rolls Series, II, pp. 147, 148).

These are not isolated examples of incompleteness and inaccuracy. They are cited, however, not so much for the purpose of impugning the general accuracy of the work, as for the purpose of emphasizing its tentative character. There is no doubt of the soundness of the major portion of Professor Mitchell's work, and his historical honesty is exemplary. His pages are crowded with references to authorities, which enable the reader easily to assure himself about the correctness or fulness of any statement. The book should receive a hearty welcome as a much needed and distinctly important addition to our literature.

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SEEBOHM, F. *Customary Acres and Their Historical Importance*. Pp. xiii, 274. Price, \$4. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1914.

These unfinished papers were begun by the late Mr. Seebohm in hope that they might furnish the European background of his well known studies. The work was planned on too vast a scale and remained incomplete at his death. Enough had been accomplished, however, to exhibit the possibilities of the project and to justify publication. "If it can be shown that the British customary acres form a normal group coinciding with a corresponding normal group on the other side of the channel similar in area and in the form of 1 x 10, like those in England, these customary acres will take a place of new interest in economic inquiry. It may be possible to follow them back to the central home from which the Celtic tribes or possibly earlier immigrants wandered into the western extremities of Europe bringing with them as part of their racial possession whatever of civilization they had already attained to, whether derived from a still earlier home, or gathered since their settlement in Central Europe, from the agricultural methods of the great corn growing regions of the nearer or farther East" (p. 7).

The search for this central home carries Mr. Seebohm to the delta of the Danube and to the valley of the Po. The relations of land measures and lineal measures of distance are indeed suggestive of social contact, though many will no doubt be somewhat skeptical of the precise nature of this contact. The inquiry is then pushed further afield by studies of the Mediterranean basin. The influence of the Graeco-Roman world upon measures of land and of distance seems to have been considerable, more considerable than most students of open field husbandry have been inclined to suppose. It would be strange, but not passing belief, if such a study of measures and plough lands should ultimately furnish a connecting link between the open

fields of the middle ages and the agriculture of classical antiquity. The "shell" of the open field village, which Mr. Seebohm has already made the basis of much significant speculation, thus seems to receive new and mysterious meaning in these posthumous pages.

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VINOGRADOFF, PAUL (Ed. by). *Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History*
Vol. IV. Pp. vii, 403. Price, 12/6. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914.

This volume contains two monographs: *The History of Contract in Early English Equity*, by W. T. Barbour; *The Abbey of St. Bertin and its Neighborhood, 900-1350*, by G. W. Coopland. Both studies exhibit to a marked degree the intensive utilization of special sources that characterizes the series, but this volume is not as interesting to the general student as its predecessors. The subjects are in themselves of special appeal and the results are not sufficiently coördinated with the general problems to which they are related.

Professor Barbour's study of contract in equity utilizes new material much of which is unpublished—the petitions presented to the chancellor. Accounts of the development of chancery jurisdiction have hitherto been founded primarily upon the text writers. Some petitions have been published but so small a portion of the total mass available that no conclusions could be drawn. Between the accession of Richard II and the early years of Henry VIII there are preserved 377 bundles of petitions covering approximately 300,000 cases. These have been examined by the author with particular care during the early period, and by an adequately selective process for the later period. The material is defective with reference to a general study of chancery jurisdiction because barely one-tenth of the petitions are endorsed with the judgment. The evidence here available thus adds little to our knowledge of the legal doctrines underlying decisions or of the sources from which the chancellors derived the essential principles of their jurisprudence. The petitions throw considerable light, however, upon the chronology of equity jurisdiction, and it appears that the chancellor had built up a considerable series of precedents in contract before the common law began to compete with its rival remedy afforded by the action of assumpsit.

The interest of the monograph is thus much narrower than its title would suggest. No attempt is made to trace the doctrines to their source. Professor Barbour is inclined to regard the canon law as the most significant influence, but it would seem that the law merchant must have furnished some notions. There is reference to the substantially appellate jurisdiction of the chancellor in cases involving the law merchant, but the relation of equity to the law merchant is not treated systematically. Probably the petitions throw little light upon the subject, and the author confined himself largely to the evidence of the petitions. The common law doctrines are concisely stated in excellent introductory chapters.

Mr. Coopland's study of the manuscript and printed materials concerning the Abbey of St. Bertin in Artois contains excellent chapters on status,